

What Is Claimed Is:

1. A method for releasing a data processing unit (90) for processing project data of a project, according to which a client requests the usage permission for using a data processing unit (90) for processing the project data belonging to a predetermined project; a first signature (I) is generated by signing predetermined project data belonging to the project; the first signature (I) is verified as to its correctness; and the data processing unit (90) is only released to process the project data belonging to the selected project if the first signature (I) has been verified as correct.
2. The method as recited in Claim 1, wherein the first signature (I) is generated in a device for generating a usage permission (50, 70), the predetermined project data being transmitted via a communication network to the usage-permission generating device (50, 70).
3. The method as recited in Claim 1, wherein the predetermined project data are cryptographically protected; the predetermined, cryptographically protected project data are transmitted via a communication network to the usage-permission generating device (50, 70); and the first signature (I) is generated, in that the predetermined, cryptographically protected project data are signed by the usage-permission generating device (50, 70).

4. The method as recited in Claim 2,  
wherein  
a second signature (II) is generated by signing the  
predetermined project data;  
the predetermined project data and the second signature  
(II) are transmitted to the usage-permission generating  
device (50);  
the second signature is verified as to its correctness;  
and  
the first signature (I) is generated from the  
predetermined project data only if the second signature  
(II) is correct.
5. The method as recited in Claim 3,  
wherein  
a second signature (II) is generated by signing the  
predetermined, cryptographically protected project data;  
the predetermined, cryptographically protected project  
data and the second signature (II) are transmitted to the  
usage-permission generating device (50);  
the second signature (II) is verified as to its  
correctness; and  
the first signature (I) is generated from the  
predetermined, cryptographically protected project data  
only if the second signature is correct.
6. The method as recited in one of Claims 1 through 5,  
wherein an invoice data record for usage of the data  
processing unit (90) is generated for the client as a  
function of the predetermined project data.
7. The method as recited in one of Claims 1 through 5,  
wherein a client is assigned a plurality of value units  
for the release of the data processing unit (90) for  
multiple projects, the value units being devalued

accordingly in response to a request by the client for a usage right.

8. A communication system for releasing a data processing unit for processing project data of a selected project, comprising  
a computer (10), assigned to a client, in which a data processing unit (90) is implemented and which has a memory device (20) in which predetermined project data of at least one project to be processed are stored;  
a usage-permission generating device (50), assigned to the computer (10), which includes a first device (70) for generating a first signature (I) from the predetermined project data of a selected project;  
the computer (10) having a device (110) for verifying the first signature (I) and for releasing the data processing unit (90), which releases the data processing unit (90) for processing the project data belonging to the selected project only if the first signature (I) is correct.
9. The communication system as recited in Claim 8, wherein  
the computer (10) has an interface for connection to a communication network and a device (30) for cryptographically protecting the predetermined project data, in particular using a hash function; and  
the usage-permission generating device (50) has an interface for connection to the communication network, so that the first signature (I) can be transmitted via the communication network to the computer (10).
10. The communication network as recited in Claim 8, wherein  
the computer (10) is assigned a second signature device (130) for generating a second signature (II) from the

predetermined project data;  
the computer (10) is designed for transmitting the second signature (II) and the associated, predetermined project data via a communication network to the usage-permission generating device (50); and  
the usage-permission generating device (50) has a device (160) for verifying the second signature (II), the first signature device (70) only generating the first signature (I) if the second signature (II) is correct.

11. The communication network as recited in Claim 9,  
wherein  
the computer (10) is assigned a second signature device (130) for generating a second signature (II) from the predetermined, cryptographically protected project data;  
the computer (10) is designed for transmitting the second signature (II) and the associated, predetermined, cryptographically protected project data via the communication network to the usage-permission generating device (50); and  
the usage-permission generating device (50) has a device (160) for verifying the second signature (II), the first signature device (70) only generating the first signature (I) if the second signature (II) is correct.
12. The communication system as recited in one of Claims 8 through 11,  
characterized by a device (120) for generating an invoice data record for the client for usage of the data processing unit (90) as a function of the predetermined project data of a selected project.
13. The communication system as recited in one of Claims 8 through 12,  
wherein

the usage-permission generating device is a chip card (190) in which the first signature device (197) is implemented and which is able to generate a predetermined number of first signatures; and a chip-card reader is assigned to the computer (10).

14. The communication system as recited in one of Claims 8 through 13, characterized by a memory (170), assigned to the computer (10), in which at least one value unit for the release, with costs, of the data processing unit (90) for processing project data of at least one selected project is stored for at least one client; and a device (180) for devaluing the value units.